

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Special Meeting
December 10, 2004
Fish and Game Headquarters, Boise, ID**

A special meeting of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission was called to order by Chair Nancy Hadley at 8:05 a.m. Commissioners Cameron Wheeler, Marcus Gibbs, Alex Irby and Wayne Wright responded to the role call. Commissioners John Watts and Gary Power were present in the Director's Office. Commissioner Wright left the call at 8:10 a.m. briefly and rejoined the call in progress.

Present in the Director's Office: Director Steven Huffaker; Terry Mansfield, Deputy Director; Dallas Burkhalter, Deputy Attorney General; Tracey Trent, Chief, Natural Resources Policy Bureau; Jim Unsworth, Chief, Bureau of Wildlife; Jeff Gould, Wildlife Game Manager; Don Kemner, Wildlife Staff Biologist; Brad Compton, Wildgame Manager; Eddie Mitchell, Conservation Public Information Supervisor and Mary Boyer, Administrative Assistant.

The meeting was scheduled to set the 2005 rules for wild turkey season.

RULES

Game Birds: 2005 Wild Turkey Seasons

Commissioners were provided information prior to the conference call on the staff recommendations and the public input to include regional open houses and Idaho Department of Fish and Game website questionnaire for the spring and fall 2005 turkey seasons. Director Huffaker stated that Don Kemner, Wildlife Staff Biologist, was in the office and would go over the staff recommendations.

Chair Hadley opened up the floor for questions. Alex Irby asked if other Commissioners had heard of any conflicts with the general elk season and the fall turkey hunts. Neither Director Huffaker nor Commissioner Hadley were aware of any conflicts with the two hunts. Commissioner Gibbs had a question concerning the Public Input page stating that the late general hunt in the Clearwater region would be on private lands only and if this was part of the staff recommendation. Chair Hadley stated conversation would be resorted to staff recommendations and questions to discuss the turkey seasons.

Don Kemner addressed the issue and stated that the public input was taken from the IDFG website questionnaire and little input from regional offices. The proposal to make the late general fall hunt in the Clearwater region open on private lands only received only 23 % support. Mr. Kemner explained that the low public support was due to the fact the public did not understand the reason for this recommendation. It is to deal with

nuisance and depredating turkeys on private lands. These three units are where there are numerous nuisance and depredation problems on private lands, and staff wants to focus hunting towards these areas. There are turkeys on public lands in the same units and staff feels that there is no reason to hunt turkeys at that time because they are not causing any problems and want to put the hunting pressure where the nuisance birds are. Staff supports the idea of a late general fall season in the Clearwater region, even extending to December 31st, but would like to create an opportunity to focus that hunting opportunity where there are nuisance and depredating birds rather than applying more hunting pressure on birds that are not causing problems.

Director Huffaker explained that when you ask the public if they want to limit where they can hunt turkeys in the fall they will always say no. They do not want limitations but want to go where they can find turkeys. This is a depredation situation, and the reason for the hunt is to reduce the turkey population on private property where there are problems with turkeys. This is an alternative to a depredation hunt so staff recommendation is to focus on a late fall season on private property.

Chair Hadley asked if the region had a way to facilitate willing sportsmen who want to hunt turkeys with willing landowners. Commissioner Irby stated that in a similar turkey depredation hunt sportsmen were given a list of landowners who wanted the turkey population decreased on their property. This process worked well and Mr. Irby sees no reason why this would not work for this hunt. Mr. Kemner stated that the regional population manager has confirmed that there are landowners who want the hunters on their property and there will not be a problem with hunters finding a place to hunt or gaining access to the private property.

04-89 Commissioner Gibbs moved and Commissioner Wright seconded a motion TO ADOPT, BY PROCLAMATION, CHANGES TO RULES GOVERNING THE TAKING OF GAME BIRDS, IDAPA 13.01, CHAPTER 09, RULES 103, 607, AND 800 (APPENDIX 37, EXHIBIT 56). THE TEMPORARY RULES WILL BE IN EFFECT UNTIL ADOPTED AS PERMANENT RULES BY THE LEGISLATURE. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

MISCELLANEOUS

Chair Hadley would like to discuss at the January workshop how the Commission does business, how items should be brought before the Commission and where items fit on the calendar. Other topics for discussion will be the chukar hunting extension that was suggested for the Magic Valley region and ideas on how to solve some of the issues that occurred with the late November cow elk hunt east of Idaho Falls near the Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Director Huffaker stated that there is a conflict with the March 16-18 meeting dates due to staff attending the North American conference. Chair Hadley asked the Director to

send out proposed alternate dates for the March meeting. The Commission will confirm the March dates at its January meeting.

Adjournment 8:40 a.m.